



FOLLOW OUR LEAD

Tales from Successful Vermont Safe Routes to School Programs

Vermont Safe Routes to School 2014 Annual Forum



West Rutland School

Sgt. J.J. Bixby



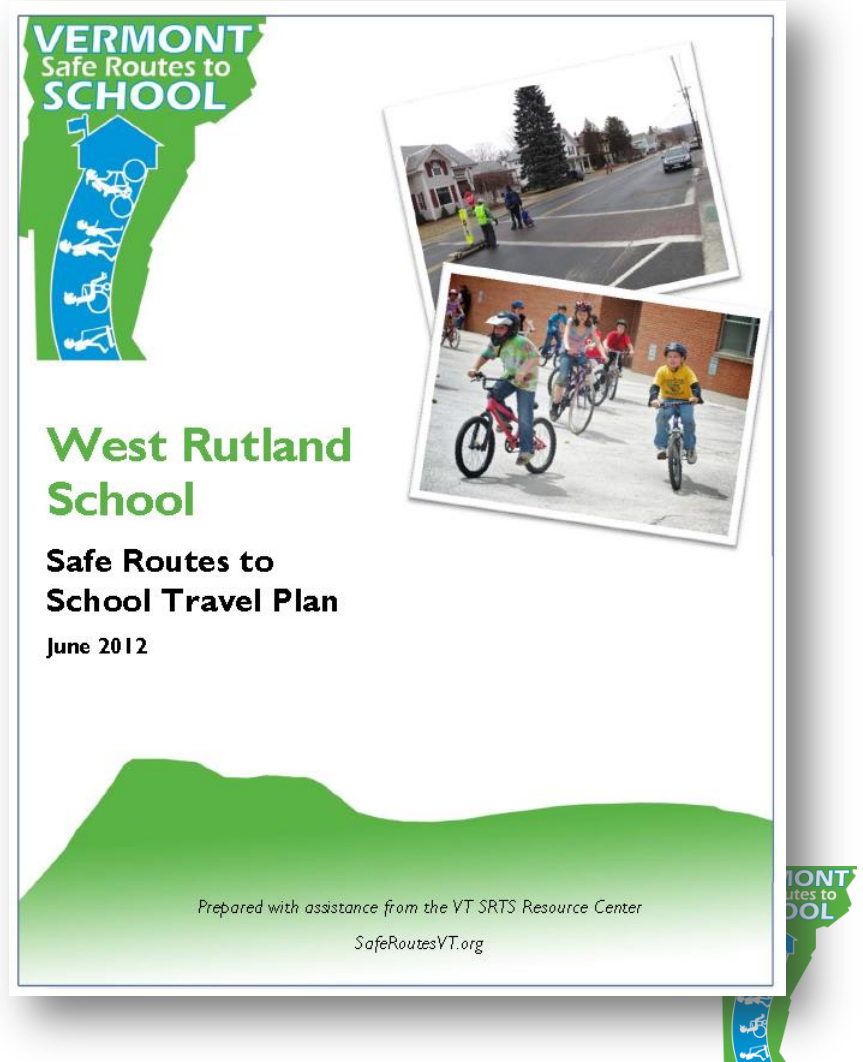
Overview

- 335 students in K-12
- School located on a busy Main Street in a small community
- 41% of students live within ½ mile, 83% live within 2 miles of school
- 17% walk, 1% bike, 18% school bus, 56% car
- Joined the SRTS program in January 2012



School Travel Plan

- Team building
- Visioning
- Identification of barriers
- Assessment of programmatic and infrastructure priorities
- Implementation plan
- Grant opportunities



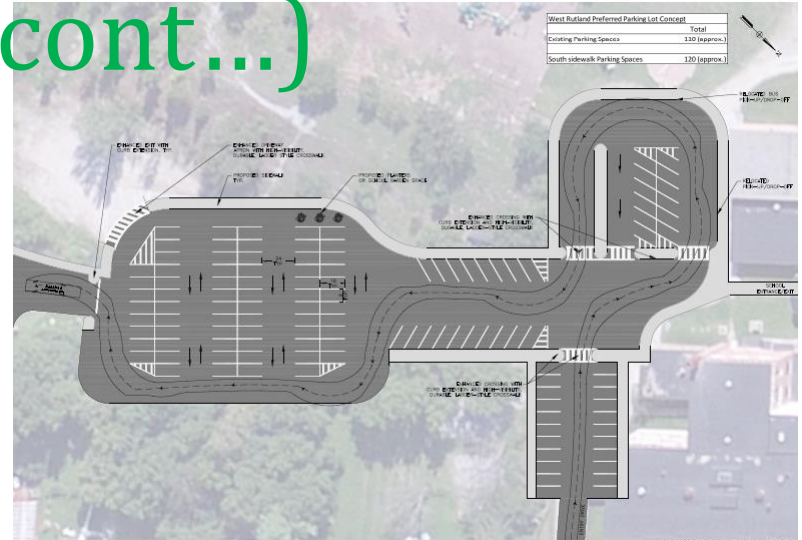
Resulting Activities

- Walk Smart/Bike Smart Vermont! curriculum
 - Bike Rodeo
- International and Vermont Walk and Roll to School Days
- Walking School Buses
- Walk at Lunch Day



Resulting Activities (cont...)

- Modifying school dismissal
- Integration of High School Students with activities
- Re-alignment of parking lot
- SRTS Infrastructure award



Lessons Learned

- Work closely with Town Government in planning routes during Travel Plan development
- Solicit, borrow, beg, do whatever you have to, to gain parent/public input and ideas
- Get statistical data from local law enforcement
- MUST have parental and school staff involvement AND assistance
- After survey, we found a majority of our “driven to/from school” students only lived 1 to 1 ½ mile(s) away from school.
- Utilize modified data collection sheet for survey work



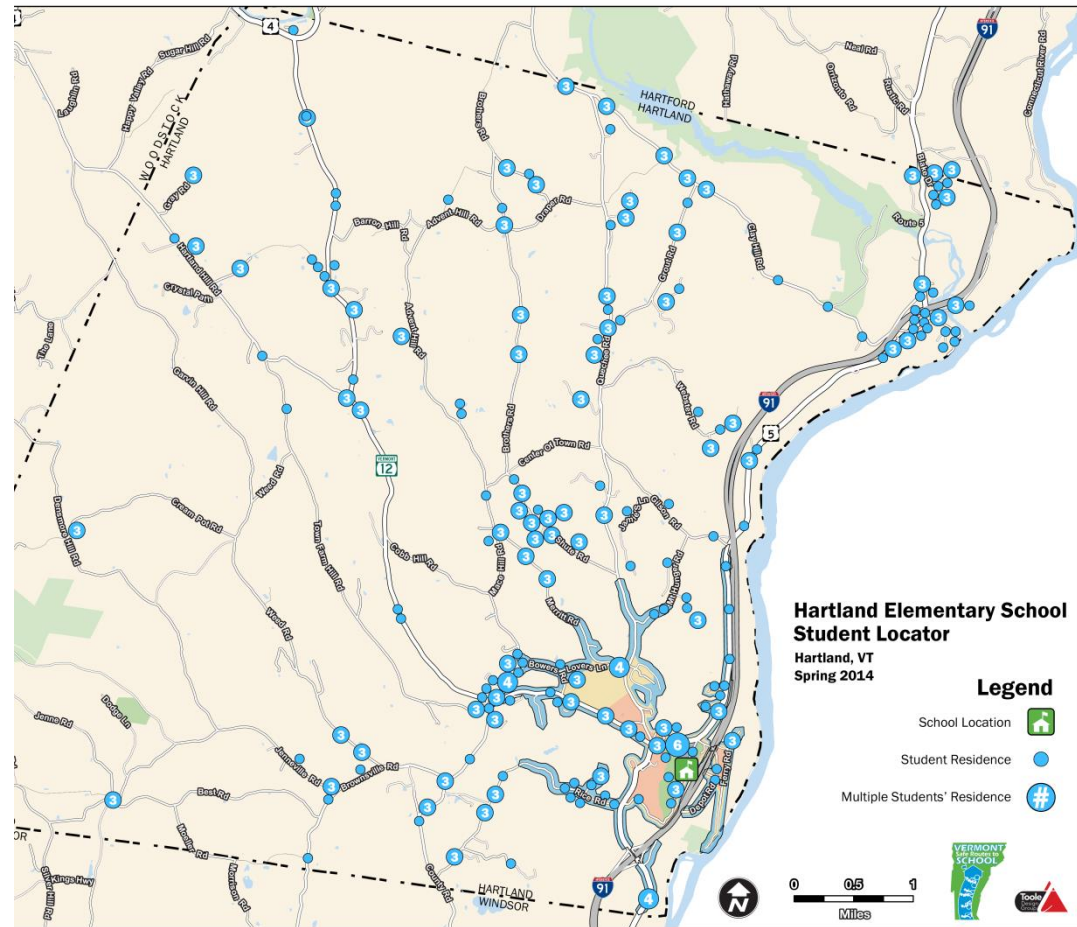
Next Steps

- Bigger and Better (improved) bike rodeo in spring
- Improve scheduling and coordination of WSBS classes
- Tie-in our SRTS and WSBS efforts with the 12th grade and Kindergarten “Senior Buddy” Program
- Further enhancement of travel plan and grant projects



Hartland Elementary School

Deb Christie-Maples



Overview

- 298 students in K-8
- School located on a low volume road off of a major route
- 4% of students live within ½ mile, 24% live within 2 miles of school
- Few students walk or bike to school regularly
- Joined the SRTS program in April 2013



Walk to School Program

- Walk on Wednesday (WOW) Program
 - 10 weeks in fall and 10 weeks in spring
 - Walk from the Hartland Recreation Center
 - Led by school staff



Walk at School Program



- ¼ Mile walking path created in back of school
- Students encouraged to walk laps during recess
- Participation tracked by staff
- Walk Across America Map provides visual for miles walked



Recognition of Walkers

- Announcements made when Walk Across America milestones are met
- Walk on Wednesday (WOW) walkers honored during a November assembly
- Foot charms distributed for miles walked
- Walkers treated to a grab-and-go breakfast on the last WOW



Lessons Learned

- Try out several route options to determine safest
- Important to get staff and parental buy-in
- Find ways to include older students
- Include all students, regardless of ability, in program
- Motivators: Seeing progress on map, foot charms, food



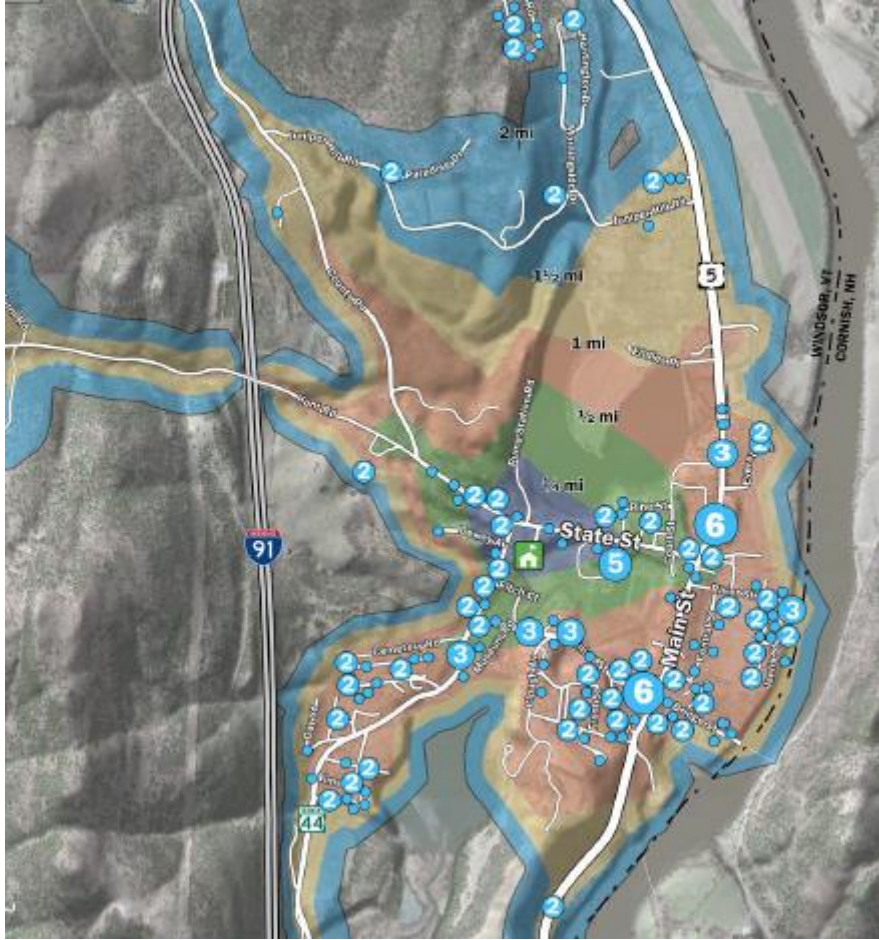
Next Steps

- Bicycle Rodeo in the Spring
- Public Health Week – 1st week in April
 - Every class to walk a mile during school day
 - Bussed kids dropped off at walking school bus start



Windsor State Street School

Donna Ewald



Overview

- 248 students in K-6
- School located in a well connected neighborhood
- 20% of students live within ½ mile, 73% live within 2 miles of school
- 25% students walk and less than 1% bike to school
- Joined the SRTS program in August 2011



Bicycle and Pedestrian Education

- Walk Smart taught to all K-2 students
- Bike Smart taught to all 4th grade students
- Utilized Khol's Kids Bike Trailer last year
- Bike Safety Fair held at the Windsor Recreation Center each year.



Walking Year-Round

- Weekly walking school bus walks each Wednesday throughout the year
 - School staff lead bus from Price Chopper (1.0 mile walk)
 - Students frequent walkers cards punched for participation
 - Raffle for incentive items like pedometers
 - Incentives include hat days, obstacle courses, and dance parties
- Winter Walking
 - Fun for kids to walk in snow
 - Hot chocolate is a popular incentive



Building Community



Collaborate with High School Students on larger event days

- High school students walk with younger students

Walk to School

- High school National Honors Society students lead walking school buses and model safe walking behaviors

Walk during the School Day

- Entire K-12 school community took a break to walk together
- Older students matched up 1-on-1 with younger students
- Walked from school around the town square and back (1.3 miles)



Lessons Learned

- Figure out a way to get administration on board.
- Invite town managers, police, fire dept. to celebratory events. Have your school mascot and have him/her walk with you!
- Send out calendars and notices ahead for parents to know when and where the walks will happen.
- Have students sign up for neighborhood walks and give emails or telephone numbers for students and leaders for inclement weather or sickness.
- Have high visibility vests for walkers to wear.
- Punch cards are great motivators.
- Work with parents to create a network of volunteers.
- Make it Fun and walkers and bikers will come back each week



Next Steps

- Add more walking school bus routes
- Enlist town staff and older students to lead walking school buses
- Work with bus company to arrange monthly drop-off at Price Chopper





J.J. Bixby, West Rutland School

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Donna Ewald, Windsor State Street School

QUESTIONS?

